

Offices close on 23<sup>rd</sup> December and re-open on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2010

# h rbour *trust*

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Autumn/Winter Issue 2009

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**



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Company N° (3292236), charity N° (1062477) . registered office as back page. Primarily funded by Greenwich and Bexley Health Authority, as well as the London Boroughs of Bexley and Greenwich. We also gratefully acknowledge individual donations

## EDITORIAL



Hi Folks!

I'm sure you've all been eagerly awaiting this newsletter so I am just in time to get it out before the Christmas holidays.

Many of you will know by now that we no longer send a printed copy. Due to insufficient funds after cutbacks which has hit us hard. It was felt that what funds were available would be best used in providing the basic services that our clients so desperately need. We are small and it has not been possible to recruit sufficient volunteers to do additional fundraising.

At UK Black Pride Event on 15 August 2009 I'd hoped to see some of you visiting the 4th annual gathering. Held in the safe and tranquil grounds of Regents Park College, there was a marketplace, workshops, food stalls, licensed bars and chill out zones, entertainment and music. I took some photographs which are displayed on our web page <http://www.iain-rossmacleod.co.uk/harbour/index.html>.

Click on Events then Black Pride.

There was something for everyone and Rory Goring, the Harboursafe coordinator, had a stall too. I assisted him, manning it during the afternoon. The show attracted a massive and diverse crowd of beautiful people from all races & genders enjoying the sunshine. If you haven't already seen the musical acts go to their webpage <http://www.ukblackpride.org.uk/> where there are videos including the British Soul Queen, Beverley Knight who performed.

I sincerely hope that you've all had an enjoyable time during the summer. The dark nights have arrived and for the first time ever, the Christmas lights over Oxford Street, Regent Street and St Paul's Cathedral were switched on simultaneously with Jim Carrey and Colin Firth doing the honours. All over town, dark winter nights are lit up as London glitters under a canopy of sparkling Christmas lights.

## CARIBBEAN SEA

However I will not be here to enjoy the Christmas this year. I have decided to escape the cold and wintry weather and on December 14<sup>th</sup> I'll fly from Heathrow to Cancun in Mexico and arrive in that evening.

Basking in the warm sunshine on the golden sand and relaxing underneath the palm trees whilst listening to the gently lapping waves of the Caribbean Sea will better suit me.

Nestled between Mexico and Guatemala on the Caribbean coast of Central America, Belize is one of the few remaining unspoiled places on earth. I first visited Belize when I was 44 years of age and spent three months exploring the country. An account of my travels including the many photographs that I took can be found on my website [http://www.iains-images.co.uk/pages/09\\_wrlld\\_travel/20belize/01\\_belize\\_city/belize\\_city1Frameset.htm](http://www.iains-images.co.uk/pages/09_wrlld_travel/20belize/01_belize_city/belize_city1Frameset.htm) Now 21 years later I am eager to return.

I've arranged to pick up a rental car to drive down into Belize.

I believe there will be a family reunion this

Christmas so I expect to meet

cousins whom I last saw some years

ago in New York

and Chicago as they arrive

to stay in Burrell Boom where my

first cousin has built a large modern house.



Searching on the Internet I made a friend who lives in Orange Walk, a small town in the north of the country, and during the last two months we have got to know each other. As on previous occasions I'll take my camera and laptop so during my three weeks there I'll upload photos and copy so if anyone wishes to follow my adventures do so at my website.

Wishing you all a  
great holiday and  
a Happy 2010.

Iain

## WORLD AIDS DAY

December 1 was World Aids Day but there are many support services in Greenwich that can offer help and support throughout the year if you are affected by HIV or Aids.

Tuesday 1st December was World AIDS Day 2009, and lots of charity events were going on all throughout London. According to the Health Protection Agency (HPA), 42 percent of all people in the UK that were diagnosed with HIV are in London. These World AIDS Day London events are expected to raise awareness about the disease.

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### FUNDING. DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN

In the past 10 years the number of people being seen for HIV care has more than trebled, whilst a recent National AIDS Trust survey into Primary Care Trusts revealed that in the same period the amount spent on HIV prevention has decreased.

Deborah Jack, Chief Executive of the National AIDS Trust, said: "For over ten years the Government and health services have been failing to bring HIV in the UK under control and diagnoses among gay and bisexual men continue to rise.

"Funding for prevention and testing must urgently be increased and the Government must make informed policy commitments to control the epidemic.

"But the gay community must also act and gay men, gay businesses, the gay media all must respond to what is in essence a public health crisis for gay men.

"If amongst the general public there was over one in 20 with such a serious infectious disease, it would dominate politics and priorities. If we want the wider society to act on HIV, the gay community must take the lead."

Overall diagnoses in the UK remain high.

## AFRICAN NEWS

Gordon Brown was drawn into a row over laws punishing homosexuals with death that threatened to overshadow a meeting of Commonwealth leaders in Trinidad. The Prime Minister raised the issue of proposed new laws in Uganda with the Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni. Mr G. Brown opposed the laws.

The country's plans have caused fury from other Commonwealth nations and condemnation from gay rights groups saying Uganda should be thrown out of the Commonwealth.

Uganda's parliament is proposing an Anti-Homosexuality Bill requiring the death penalty for "aggravated homosexuality". Life sentences would be imposed on those who touch another with the intention to have sex.

The bill would even apply to Ugandans who commit homosexual acts, but live overseas. Those who don't report wrongdoing could face three years in custody.

Stephen Harper, the Prime Minister of Canada, backed Mr Brown's stance.

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Patients with HIV are twice as likely to smoke as others and are more susceptible to the detrimental effects of smoking due to a swifter decline in lung function, new research shows.

This study evaluated declines in lung function among HIV-positive patients. Mostly men in their 40s, half whom were smokers, were assessed. At the end of two years, 63 patients displayed marked declines in lung function.

"These results indicate that HIV-positive patients are more susceptible to lung-related problems than HIV-negative individuals and that HIV-positive smokers are even more susceptible to developing early emphysema. Their severity is likely a function of the time that they have lived with the disease."

## IMAGINE AFRIKA

Africa's first continent-wide reality television series, aims to tackle the spread of HIV by exploring the day-to-day lives of young people from diverse communities in broadcasts watched by more than 200-million people.

Using the tagline: "Imagine the Possibility of an HIV free Generation: It Begins with YOU!", the African inspired and produced series looks at key factors driving HIV/Aids and encourages Africans to consider what they can do to stop the spread of the virus in the continent.

The series targets young adults, 18-35 years and aims to entertain and educate by showing real life struggles and situations that are unscripted. 'Imagine Afrika III' is a dramatic departure from the first two series, but much more in-depth exploration of real people's lives. This is more compelling, dramatic, and a substantive opportunity to explore issues.

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World AIDS Day 2009: Over 1 in 200 Londoners are at this time now living with HIV. New figures released at the end of November by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) show there were 3,059 people diagnosed with HIV in London in 2008. This brings the total number of people in London with HIV to over 26,900 at the end of last year.

The two groups most affected remain gay and bisexual men and black African heterosexuals. Late diagnosis of HIV remains a serious challenge in the UK. Over half (55 per cent) of adults diagnosed were diagnosed after the point at which it is recommended treatments begin. Late diagnosis of HIV can have a serious impact on an individual's health. 73 per cent of those with HIV who died last year had been diagnosed late. And evidence shows late diagnosis drives HIV transmission, with more than half

Continued in next column.

## INFORMATION

### where to find out more about hiv

- <http://www.greenwich.gov.uk/Greenwich/HealthSocialCare/HealthMatters/HIVAIDS/VoluntarySectorServices/HarbourTrustContact.htm> The Harbour Trust is a community HIV charity which supports people living with HIV/AIDS, their carers and families.
- <http://www.metrocentreonline.org/services.htm> 110-114 Norman Road SE10 9JQ The Metro Centre aims to work with self-identified lesbian/gay/bisexual people.
- i-Base Treatment Phoneline. An HIV Treatment phoneline where you can discuss your issues with a treatment expert. 0808 8006 013
- Visit [www.aidsmap.com](http://www.aidsmap.com) for the latest news about HIV & AIDS and a fully searchable treatments database and a complete list of UK treatment centres
- <http://www.cwac.org/index.htm> Children with AIDS Charity. Specialist Paediatric HIV Service in St Mary's Hospital in Paddington, London.

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of new HIV infections caused by people who themselves are unaware of their infection. HIV is one of the most serious health challenges in the capital. It is shocking to think that more than 1 in every 200 Londoners have HIV. This means that there are likely to be on average 5 HIV positive people on every rush-hour tube. **Post sex STD tests** are a strategy--but what do they cause a person to do? Give up sex? Have less sex? Have more sex in order to "get even"?

Testing before sex is a way to keep some sex from happening, and, consequently, prevent an STD. Post sex STD tests don't do that. Pre sex STD tests will save some lives--some people will back out of the possibility of sex with that partner. Others may be way more cautious. Still others might wait for non-HIV STDs to be cured, if available.

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## H A R B O U R T R U S T

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